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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EUN](#) [MR](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: MAURITANIA: FRENCH IN AGREEMENT WITH USG POSITION

REF: STATE 13962

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Andrew Young, 1.4 (b/d).

(C) MFA Mauritania desk officer Sophie Villette on February 17 said that France agreed with the USG position on Mauritania, as expressed reftel, the points of which we had conveyed to her earlier in the day. Villette said that she had discussed the matter with DAS-equivalent for AF/C Christine Fages, who also agreed on the need to support the African Union and to press for a firm EU position. Villette said the EU was scheduled to discuss Mauritania on February 18 and that France would, at that meeting, encourage other EU member states to maintain a firm stance on the need to return Mauritania to constitutional rule. Speaking more broadly, Villette said that free and fair elections, acceptable to all players, might be the best long-term solution to Mauritania's political crisis, whether or not President Abdallahi were allowed to resume the presidency. Villette said that MFA AF A/S-equivalent Stephane Gompertz was planning to lead the French delegation at the February 20 conference on Mauritania, hosted by the International Organization for Francophonie. Villette indicated that Gompertz was likely to restate the firm GOF position on Mauritania at the February 20 conference.

PEKALA